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FOLK-LORE SCRAP-BOOK.

Folk-Lore Museums. — From a communication contained in the "Public Ledger," of Philadelphia, September 3, 1890, setting forth the interest and utility of museums containing objects having relation to folk-lore, we extract the following passages : —

"Such a museum would have an extended field, and might embrace a vast number of objects which do not ordinarily come within the domain of the collector, and yet are most valuable as illustrating customs, myths, and superstitions.

"Amulets, charms, implements for games, and objects used in divination and in religious and other ceremonies, especially among primitive peoples, would be included, as well as those natural objects with which man has associated some myth or legend, or has attributed with occult and supernatural properties.

"Many illustrations of the latter class may be cited, such as the pierced pebble of natural formation, referred to by Jacob Abbott in one of those familiar children's classics, the Rollo Books, which children call a 'wishing-stone,' and cast with a wish into the nearest stream. The rabbit's foot to bring good luck, and the potato and the horse-chestnut carried to prevent rheumatism, belong to the same category, with many other articles, often quite uninteresting in themselves, and yet which, if properly arranged and labelled with their special story or signification, would form a vastly entertaining collection, and a valuable aid in the study to which the Folk-Lore Society is devoted. . . .

"No subject within the range of scientific investigation appeals more strongly to popular interest than that so well designated as 'folk-lore,' and the very instinct that underlies the custom of collecting strange and rare and curious objects is one through which much of this same lore may be accounted for. As folk-lore deals with ideas, so it would be the mission of the folk-lore museum to collect, arrange, and classify the objects associated with them. Such a museum would form an essential part of a museum of ethnology, and would serve an admirable part in supplementing the existing collections of art and archæology.

"It would include amulets and charms, not alone the admirable specimens of glyptic cut, such as are brought together by collectors of gems, but objects of paper and wood and metal, of which a great variety may be found among the people of the foreign colonies of our cities, as well as among the native Indians and our negro population. Many contributions relating to religious usages and ceremonies could be obtained among the same classes; while the subject of games, in itself practically inexhaustible, would furnish material for a museum of its own. . . .

"Among the materials used in games, special attention might be paid to playing cards. No collection of playing cards exists in any of the public institutions of this country, and there are few, if any, private collectors, although in Europe they have been deservedly the object of serious study.

The British Museum contains a superb collection, of which a special catalogue has been made, while other notable examples are found in the National Library at Paris. They have many points of interest, as, for example, their connection with the early history of printing ; but they claim the particular regard of the folk-lorist, who may some day throw light upon the identity of the kings and queens around whom so many new traditions have grown since they commenced their long reign upon the pasteboards.

"Toys would form another and most interesting department of the museum. How many of them must have lost their original significance, to be rediscovered, it is to be hoped, at the hands of the student of folk-lore ! The Noah's ark remains, with its birds and beasts two and two, and Shem and Ham and Japhet, with little round wooden hats, to illustrate and confirm the possibilities in store in the future investigation. Poor Noah's ark ! The children of this generation have quite foregone such trifles, and it may well take its place, and that not too soon, in the folk-lore museum. The East is replete with toys that illustrate popular myths, like the Indian miracle toy of the rescue of Krishna, in which the water recedes when it touches the figure of the infant god ; and the zoölogical mythology is also well displayed in the many creatures represented among children's play-things.

"Coins, too, would have to have a place in the museum ; not the treasures usually prized by numismatists, but the broken sixpences and love tokens, the 'touch money,' and the many pieces valued as charms to invite good luck or drive away bad fortune."

THE "Buffalo Express" (Illustrated), October 12, 1890, contains a long and interesting account of the Green Corn Dance of the Iroquois at the Cattaraugus Reservation, New York, by Mrs. Harriet Maxwell Converse. The relation well exhibits the religious ceremonies in their present form, highly Christianized and civilized. Space compels us to reserve for the next number extracts from this article.

NOTES AND QUERIES.

INTERNATIONAL FOLK-LORE CONGRESS. — The date of the Second International Folk-Lore Congress has been fixed to be held in London, on or about the 20th of September, 1891, under the presidency of Mr. Andrew Lang. It is to be hoped that there may be a good attendance from America. A guarantee fund has been formed, and the prospects for an agreeable meeting are highly flattering. Americans desirous to attend may communicate with the Honorable Secretary of the Folk-Lore Society, Mr. J. J. Foster, Offa House, Upper Tooting, London, S. W.

A PROPOSED FOLK-LORE MUSEUM. — Above will be found printed (page 312) portions of a paper written by a member of the Philadelphia Chapter,